

BATMAN
No. 44

DEC. JAN.
TEN CENTS



BATMAN

A 52 PAGE
MAGAZINE

Will The
Joker
HAVE THE
LAST LAUGH



BATMAN

WITH
ROBIN
- THE BOY WONDER -

WHEN THE EVIL FASCINATION OF GAMBLING SEIZES THAT MAD BUFFOON, THE JOKER, NO ORDINARY STAKES CAN SATISFY HIM! NOTHING BUT A BIZARRE GAME FOR LIFE OR DEATH CAN CONTENT THE CLOWN PRINCE OF CRIME, WITH BATMAN AND ROBIN AS HIS OPPONENTS IN A FANTASTIC -

"GAMBLE WITH DOOM!!"



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**BOB
KANE**

Printed in U.S.A.

A HIDDEN, ILLEGAL GAMBLING HOUSE...



... HAS A STARTLING NEW CLIENT!

IT'S THE JOKER!

THIS IS JUST A SOCIAL VISIT, FOLKS! I WANT TO GAMBLE SOME OF MY LOOT—I MEAN, MY EARNINGS!



LADY FORTUNE SMILES ON THE HARLEQUIN OF HATE! AT THE ROULETTE WHEEL...

THIRTEEN WINS AGAIN!

HA, HA! WHO SAID THIRTEEN WAS UNLUCKY!

IT'S SURE LUCKY FOR YOU, JOKER!



AT THE DICE TABLE...

ANOTHER SEVEN! YOU WIN AGAIN!

HA, HA, HA! THIS IS EASIER THAN STEALING! HA, HA!



YOU'VE BROKEN THE BANK! YOU'VE WON EVERY CHIP IN THE HOUSE!

TOO BAD! IT ENDS MY WINNING STREAK!



LATER, AT THE JOKER'S UNIQUE HIDEOUT...

LEWIS, I'M SO THRILLED WITH GAMBLING THAT I'M GOING TO PLAY A SUPER-GAME. BATMAN WILL BE MY OPPONENT AND REAL LIVES WILL BE THE STAKES!

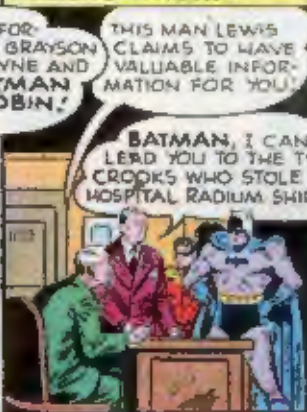
THAT WOULD BE SUPER-GAMBLING, BOSS!



EVENINGS AFTERWARD, AN EERIE
SIGH STABS GOTHAM CITY'S
NIGHT SKY!



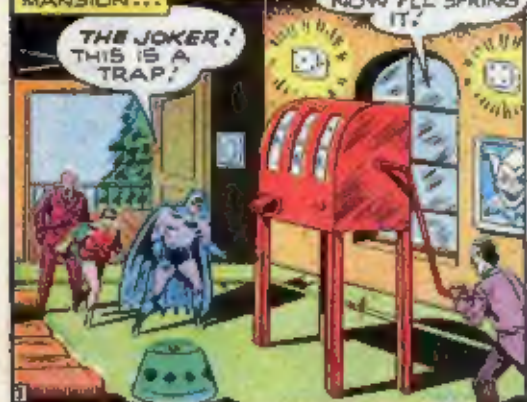
PRESENTLY, IN COMMISSIONER
GORDON'S OFFICE...



LATER, A POWERFUL SPEEDBOAT HEADS
OUT TOWARD A SMALL ISLAND...



BUT INSIDE THE ISLAND
MANSION...



AFTER THE DYNAMIC DUO RECOVERS FROM THE STUNNING TRICK...

HERE ARE THE RADIUM THIEVES—DREW AND LANE! I CAPTURED THEM—BUT THEY HAD BURIED THEIR RADIUM LOOT ELSEWHERE!



GEE, BATMAN, IF WE'D KNOWN THAT WAS HOSPITAL RADIUM WE WOULDN'T HAVE STOLEN IT!

BATMAN, I'LL GAMBLE WITH YOU FOR THESE TWO AND THEIR RADIUM SECRET.

IT'S NO DEAL, JOKER. I NEVER GAMBLE!



WIN THREE TIMES AND YOU WIN THEIR LIVES AND THE RADIUM SECRET! IF YOU LOSE, THEY DIE!



BUT I TOLD YOU, I HATE ALL GAMBLING!

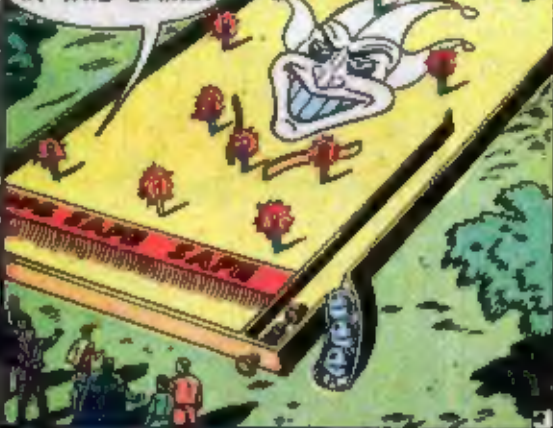
REFUSE AND I'LL FINISH THEM AND ROBIN NOW—AND YOU LOSE THE HOSPITAL'S RADIUM!

THE FIEND! I'LL HAVE TO BET MY SKILL AGAINST HIM, TO SAVE THREE LIVES AND THE RADIUM!



SOON—THE DIABOLICAL GAME OF DEATH BEGINS!

FIRST WE'LL HAVE A GAME OF SUPER-PINBALL! ROBIN AND THESE TWO THIEVES WILL BE THE "BALLS" IN THIS GAME!

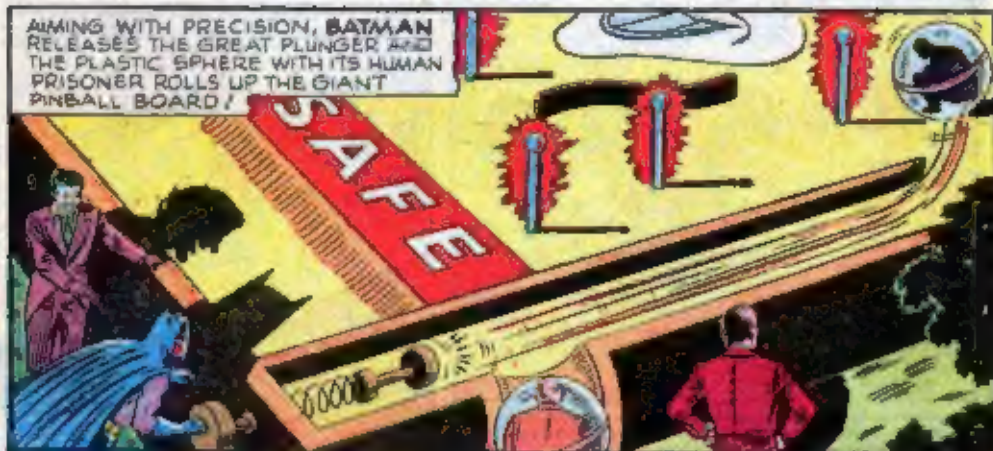


THE "PINS" ARE LIVE WIRES! AND EACH PLASTIC BALL IS WIRED—IF IT TOUCHES A "PIN," THE MAN INSIDE WILL BE ELECTROCUTED! START PLAYING, BATMAN!

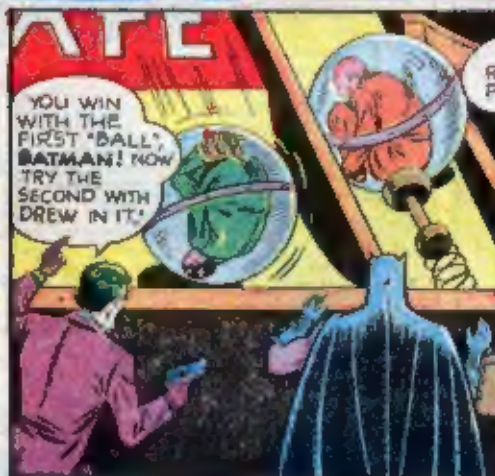




AIMING WITH PRECISION, BATMAN RELEASES THE GREAT PLUNGER AND THE PLASTIC SPHERE WITH ITS HUMAN PRISONER ROLLS UP THE GIANT PINBALL BOARD!



YOU WIN WITH THE FIRST "BALL", BATMAN! NOW TRY THE SECOND WITH DREW IN IT!



BUT THE SECOND HUMAN "BALL" LANE...

HA, HA! LANE WILL ROLL BACK INTO A PIN! HE'S DOOMED!

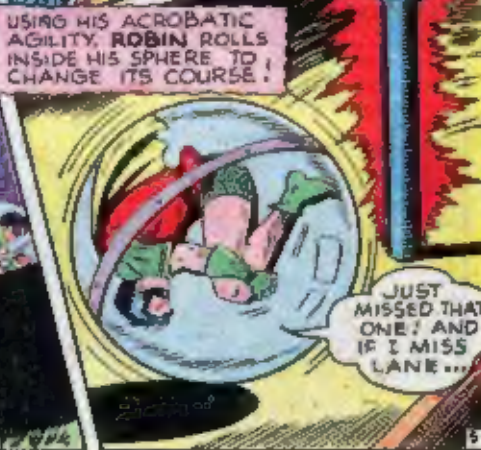


BATMAN, SHOOT ME OUT ON THE BOARD, QUICK! I CAN KNOCK LANE TO SAFETY!

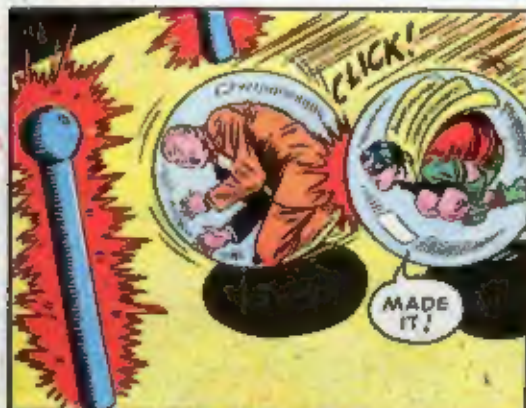
IF ROBIN'S ACROBATIC SKILL FAILS HIM...



USING HIS ACROBATIC ABILITY, ROBIN ROLLS INSIDE HIS SPHERE TO CHANGE ITS COURSE!



JUST MISSED THAT ONE! AND IF I MISS LANE...



FINALLY—"SAFE"—AFTER MISSING THE DEADLY "PIN" BY A HAIRSBREADTH...



ON THE GREEN LAWN OUTSIDE THE GRIM JESTER'S GAMBLING PALACE...

ROUND TWO, BATMAN! NOW WE'LL SHOOT DICE FOR THE MEN'S LIVES! AND IF YOU BET WRONG, THEY DIE!



PICK THREE NUMBERS! ROBIN AND THE TWO CROOKS WILL BE CHAINED TO PEGS IN THEM, AND THE HUGE DICE WILL CRUSH ONE OR ALL IF YOU BET WRONG.

A FIEND'S DICE GAME!



EVERY SENSE ALERT, THE CAPED MANHUNTER CALCULATES HOW THE DICE WILL FALL...

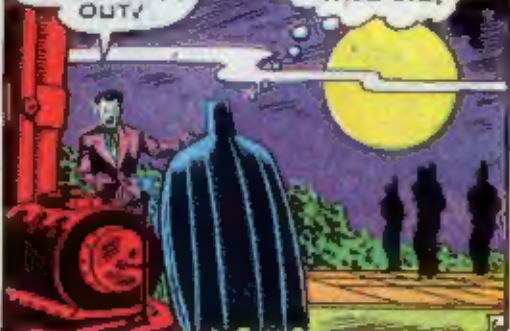
HE'S GETTING MUD ON THE RIGHT HAND EDGE OF THE DICE! IT SHOULD MAKE THEM SWERVE TO THE LEFT!

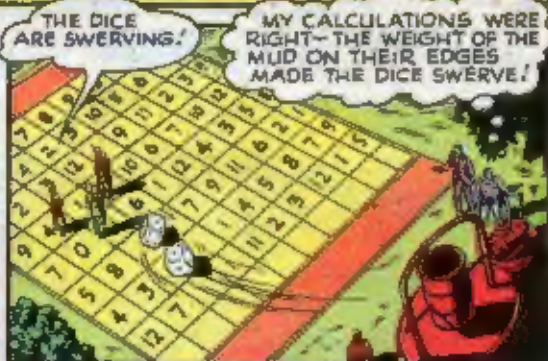
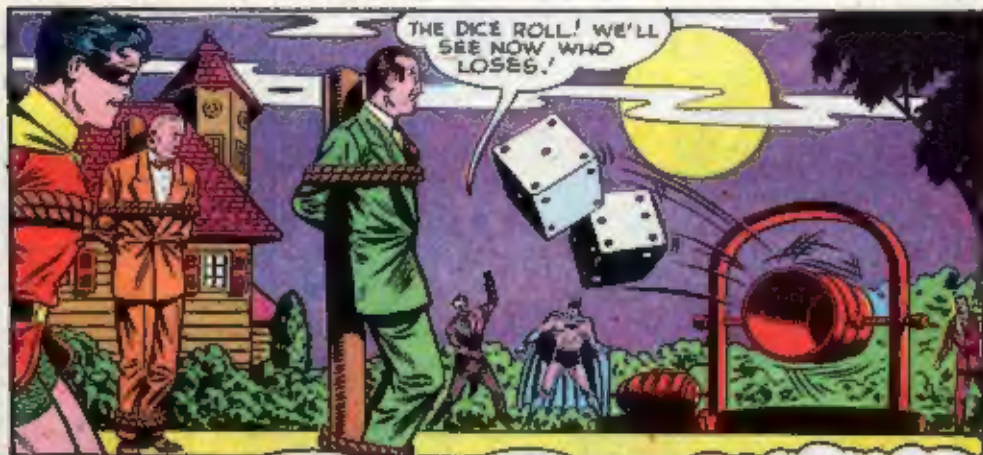
I CHOOSE 4, 6, AND 11!



NOW THAT THE DICE ARE IN THE CUP, TOUCH THAT SWITCH AND THE MOTORS WILL SHAKE THEM OUT!

IF MY FIGURING WAS WRONG, SOMEONE WILL DIE!





IN A FANTASTIC ROOM OF
THE JOKER'S MANSION...

THIS IS MY
CARD ROOM,
BATMAN!
AND HERE
YOU AND I
PLAY OUR
THIRD GAME.

WHAT
GAMBLER'S TRICK
HAVE YOU IN MIND
NOW?

ONE OF THOSE PLAYING CARD
PANELS IS A REMOTE-CONTROLLED
DOOR! THE THREE ARE LOCKED
IN...



...AND DEADLY GAS IS
PUMPED INTO THE
SEALED ROOM!
**TURN ON THE GAS,
LEWIS!**

AS THE FATAL FUMES MISS INTO THE
CHAMBER OF DOOM...

TOUCH THE RIGHT CARD, BATMAN, AND
A SECRET DOOR IN THERE WILL OPEN!
IT'S THEIR ONLY CHANCE OF ESCAPE!

ONLY ONE
CHANCE IN
DOZENS!



ONCE AGAIN THREE LIVES HANG ON
BATMAN'S CHOICE!

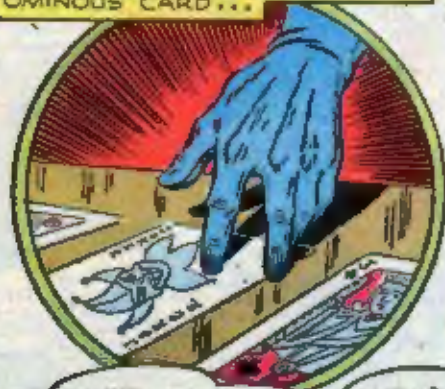
WHICH CARD WOULD THE
JOKER USE FOR THE
SECRET DOOR?

CHOOSE
QUICKLY!
THE GAS IS
OVERPOWERING
THEM!

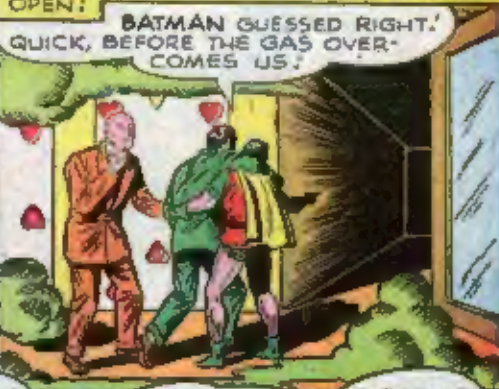
THE JOKER CARD! HE'D
FIGURE I'D AVOID THAT, BUT
USING IT WOULD APPEAL TO
HIS MAD HUMOR! I'VE GOT
TO RISK IT!



A QUIVERING HAND TOUCHES AN OMINOUS CARD...



...AND THE HIDDEN DOOR OF ESCAPE SWINGS OPEN!

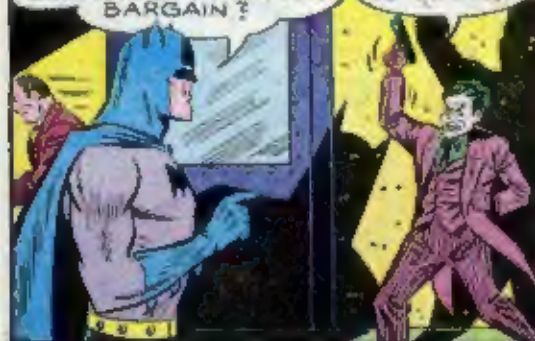


JOKER, I'VE WON THE THREE GAMBLERS FOR THE THIEVES' LIVES AND THE RADIUM! ARE YOU GOING TO STICK TO YOUR BARGAIN?

NOT YET! YOU AND I HAVE ONE FINAL GAMBLE TO MAKE!

YOU'RE GOING TO GAMBLE FOR YOUR OWN LIFE NOW—AGAINST MINE!

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU'D RING IN AN EXTRA TRICK!



MEANWHILE... NOT SO FAST! YOU THREE ARE GOING BACK IN THERE!

SO THE JOKER IS WELSHING ON HIS GAMBLE! I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN IT!

FORCED BACK THROUGH THE DOOR, ROBIN SUDDENLY SLAMS IT...

WHA-WHAT? HATE TO SLAM THE DOOR IN YOUR FACE, BUT—



—YOU SHOULD HAVE KNOCKED, LIKE THIS!

WHILE ELSEWHERE...

THE FINAL GAMBLE IS ON THIS ROULETTE WHEEL—YOUR LIFE AGAINST MINE!

HA HA! I TAKE ZERO-THE HOUSE NUMBER! AND NOW I'LL START THE MOTORS!

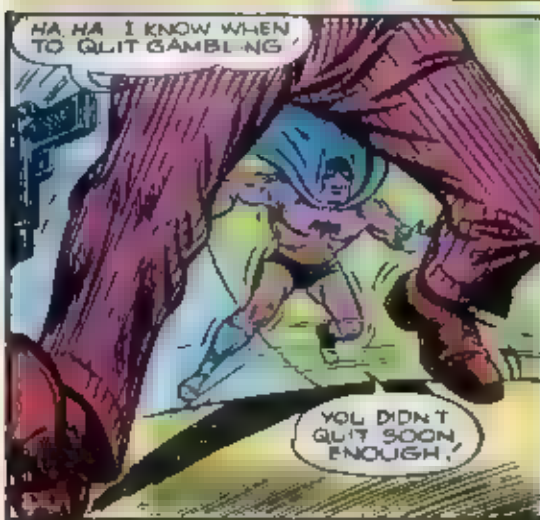
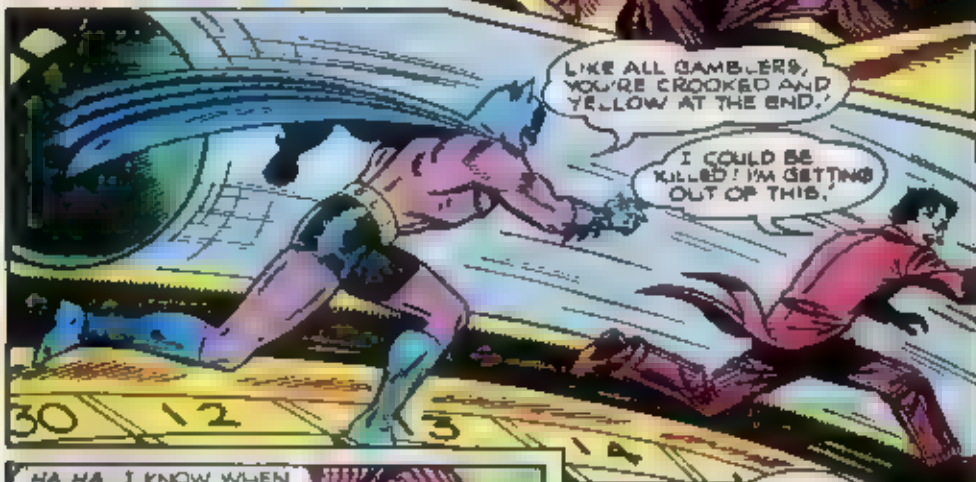
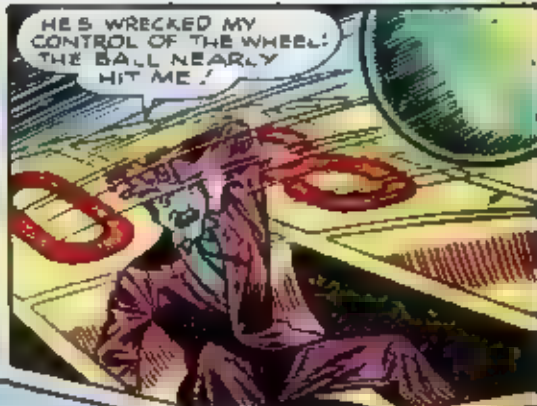
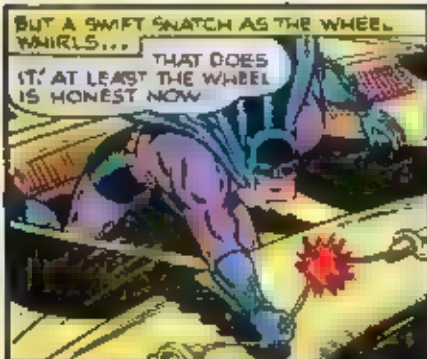
IF THAT MASSIVE METAL BALL FALLS IN YOUR SLOT, IT WILL KILL YOU! IF IN MINE, IT WILL KILL ME!

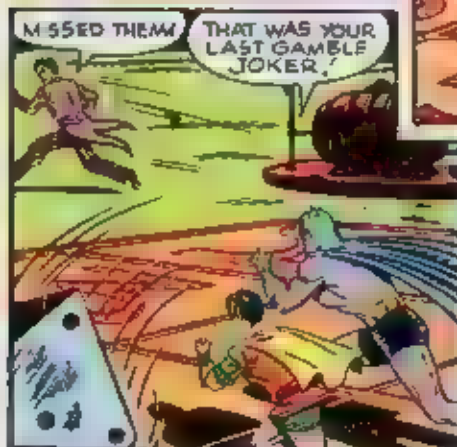
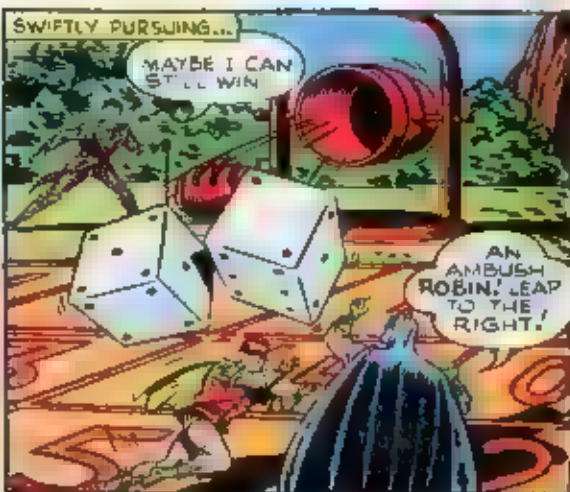
IF I KNEW HOW HE HAD THE WHEEL FIXED...

ROUND AND 'ROUND SPINS THE GREAT WHEEL, WITH LIFE THE PRIZE AND DEATH THE PENALTY!

THIS WIRE ALONG THE SIDE MUST 'FIX' THE WHEEL! IF I COULD TEAR THEM OUT...

HA HA! YOUR NUMBER NEARLY CAME UP THAT TIME!



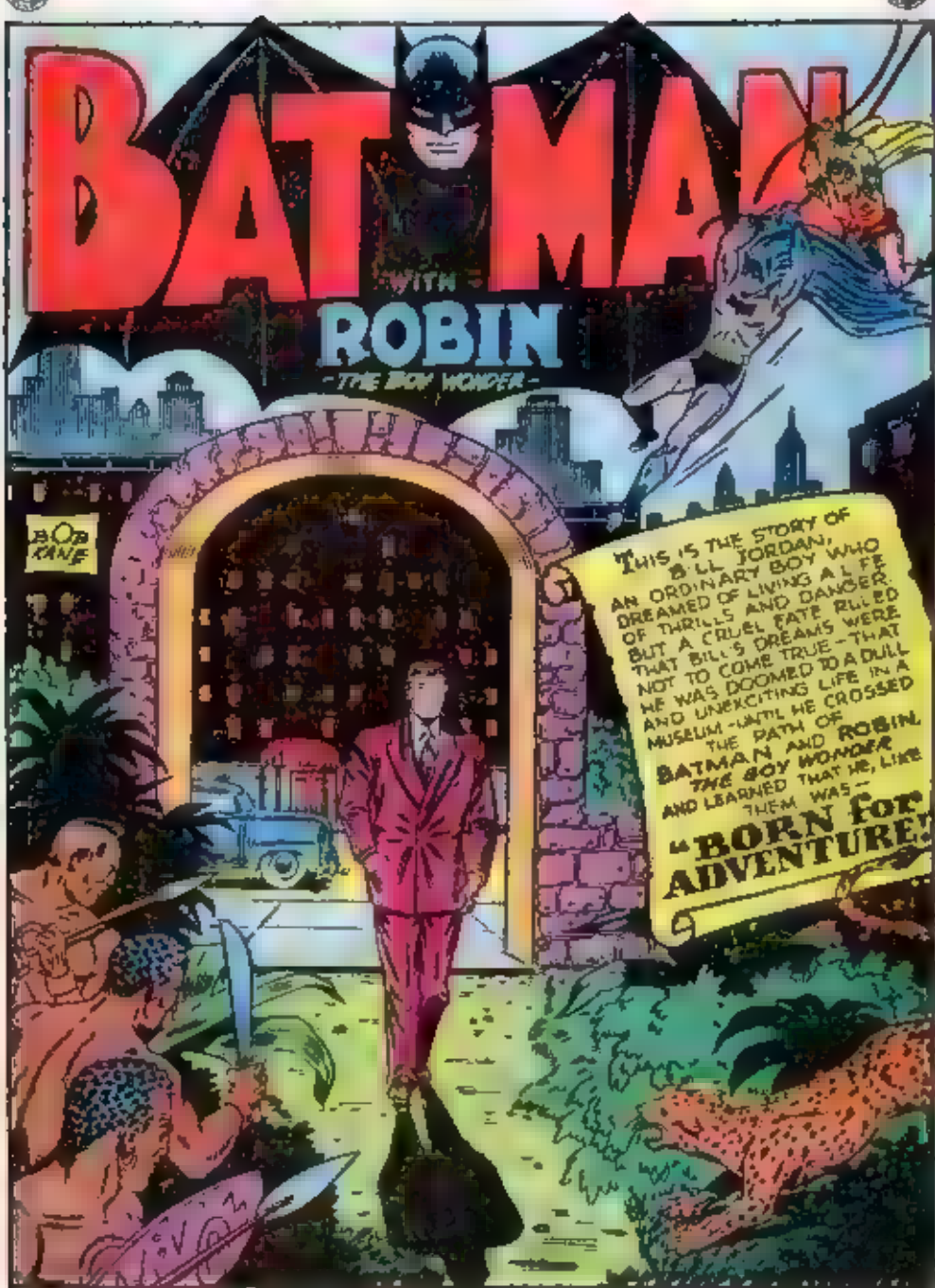


BATMAN

WITH
ROBIN
-THE BOY WONDER-

BOB
KANE

THIS IS THE STORY OF
AN ORDINARY BOY WHO
DREAMED OF LIVING A LIFE
OF THRILLS AND DANGER.
BUT A CRUEL FATE RULED
THAT BILL'S DREAMS WERE
NOT TO COME TRUE—THAT
HE WAS DOOMED TO A DULL
AND UNEXCITING LIFE IN A
MUSEUM—UNTIL HE CROSSED
THE PATH OF
BATMAN AND ROBIN,
THE BOY WONDER,
AND LEARNED THAT HE, LIKE
THEM, WAS—
**"BORN FOR
ADVENTURE!"**



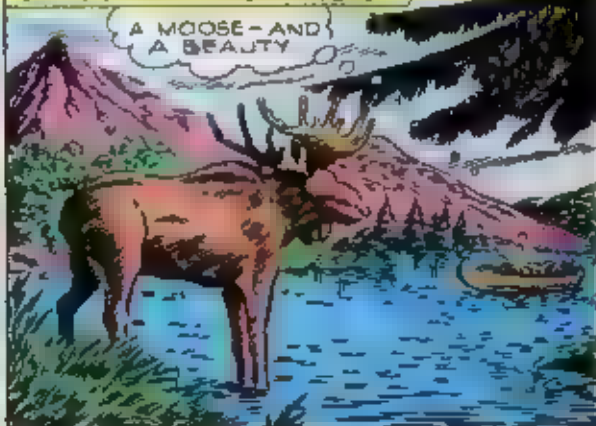


BILL JORDAN ALWAYS DREAMED OF BEING AN EXPLORER. AS A BOY HE WOULD RISK HIS NECK TO CLIMB A DIZZY CLIFF...



I HOPE OLD MAN EAGLE UNDERSTANDS THIS IS JUST A FRIENDLY VISIT.

DURING SUMMER VACATIONS, BILL HUNTED WILD GAME IN THE NORTH WOODS.



A MOOSE-AND A BEAUTY

THE YEARS ROLLED BY AND THE OLDER BILL GREW THE MORE HE DREAMED OF FAR OFF PLACES...



BORNEO-TIMBUKTU- THE CONGO-SOME DAY I'LL EXPLORE THEM ALL

ON THE DAY OF HIS GRADUATION FROM GOTHAM UNIVERSITY...

I'VE TOLD REX LAMARR ABOUT YOU, JORDAN. HE MAY TAKE YOU ON HIS NEXT AFRICAN TRIP.

NO KIDDING, PROFESSOR? GOLLY!



NEXT DAY AT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM...



I'VE READ ALL ABOUT YOUR EXPEDITIONS DR. LAMARR. I'VE ALWAYS HOPED TO MEET YOU.

THIS IS BRUCE WAYNE, WHO SPONSORED MY TRIPS.



YOUR CREDENTIALS ARE FINE, JORDAN. IF OUR DOCTOR PASSES YOU, YOU'RE ALL SET.

HE'LL PASS! HE LOOKS AS HEALTHY AS AN ATHLETE.

IN THE OFFICE OF THE EXPEDITION'S DOCTOR ALL GOES WELL - TILL AN ELECTROCARDIOGRAPH TEST IS MADE

I'M AFRAID THERE IS B.L.U. NO EXCITEMENT FOR YOU!

IT'S A SHAME, BUT THE DOCTOR IS RIGHT!

HMM... NOT SO GOOD!

BUT THERE CAN'T BE ANYTHING WRONG WITH MY HEART!



MY CAREER'S OVER BEFORE IT'S BEGUN! I'VE WASTED YEARS GETTING READY FOR NOTHING!

YOUR TRAINING WON'T BE WASTED, SON. I'LL GIVE YOU A JOB HERE IN THE MUSEUM.

I WILL BE ALMOST THE SAME WORK YOU'D DO IN THE JUNGLE, EXCEPT FOR THE RISKS!

IT WON'T SEEM THE SAME, BUT THANKS I'LL DO MY BEST!



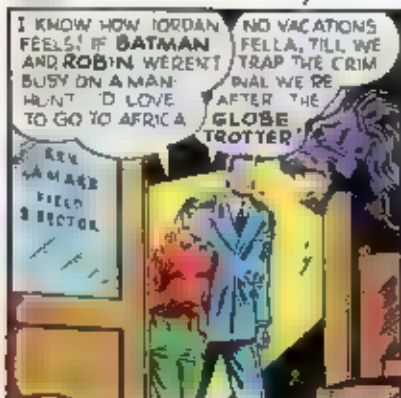
CATALOGING THE AFRICAN SECTION JORDAN? IT'S AN IMPORTANT JOB!

NOT VERY THRILLING, THOUGH. I WISH I HAD BEEN THE MAN TO DISCOVER THESE TROPHIES.

DAYS LATER, AS SOCIÉTÉ BRUCE WAYNE AND HIS YOUNG WARD, DICK GRAYSON TAKE A STROLL...

SOME MUSEUM, BRUCE! ZOO, BOTANICAL GARDEN - WHY WILL LAMARR FIND IN AFRICA THAT ISN'T RIGHT HERE?

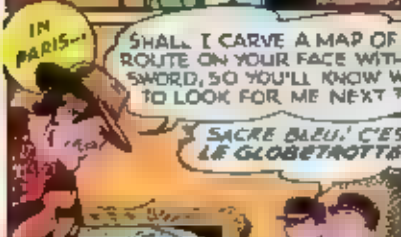




I KNOW HOW JORDAN FEELS! IF BATMAN AND ROBIN WEREN'T BUSY ON A MAN-HUNT I'D LOVE TO GO TO AFRICA

NO VACATIONS FELLA, TILL WE TRAP THE CRIMINAL WE'RE AFTER THE 'GLOBETROTTER'

SEE
MAKER
FIELD
DIRECTOR



IN
PARIS...

SHALL I CARVE A MAP OF MY ROUTE ON YOUR FACE WITH THIS SWORD, SO YOU'LL KNOW WHERE TO LOOK FOR ME NEXT?

SACRE BLEU! C'EST LE GLOBETROTTER!



FROM SANDY HOOK TO SINGAPORE MY "QUICK-FREEZE" GAS HAS DISCOURAGED THE CURIOUS PROP HIM BE'S DE THE DOOR BOYS!

WE'LL BE STIFF AS A BOARD FOR 15 MINUTES! WHO'LL GUESS WE'RE PULLING A JOB WITH A COP STANDING OUTSIDE?



THE GLOBETROTTER INFAMOUS FUGITIVE, HAS BLAZED A TRAIL OF FANTASTIC FELONIES AROUND THE WORLD! IN CEYLON



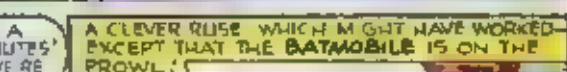
NO NO! THE POLICE WILL FIND ME UNTOUCHABLE TOO!



AND NOW THIS VERY NIGHT- IN GOTHAM C TV...

HIGH?..HEY YOU-JUST A M NUTE

EH? YOU WISH TO SEE MY CREDENTIALS?



A CLEVER RUSE WHICH MIGHT HAVE WORKED EXCEPT THAT THE BATMOBILE IS ON THE PROWL!



HERE'S HANNAGAN! WONDER IF HE'S SEEN ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS ON HIS BEAT?

MIKE!... HE'S ALIVE -
BREATHING NORMALLY -
BUT UNCONSCIOUS!

BATMAN - THE
TRANSOM'S
SMASHED!

A MOMENT LATER

WE HAVE IT
OPEN IN A
SECOND!

JIGGERS -
THE
BATMAN!

A LUCKY SHOT CAUSES THE CAPED
CRIMEFIGHTER'S DOWNFALL!

WHAT-?

SOME
SHOOTING
NOBODY
CAN STOP
US!

HOW DO YOU LIKE
SWALLOWING YOUR
WORDS ON AN
UPSET
STOMACH?

FANCY A CHILD
OPPOSING THE
GLOBETROTTER, WHO
HAS ELUDED THE POLICE
OF THE WORLD

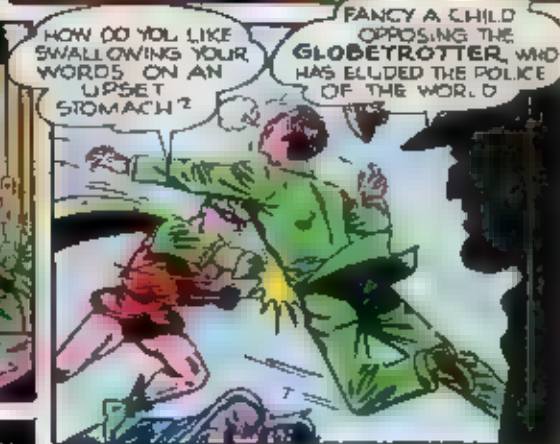
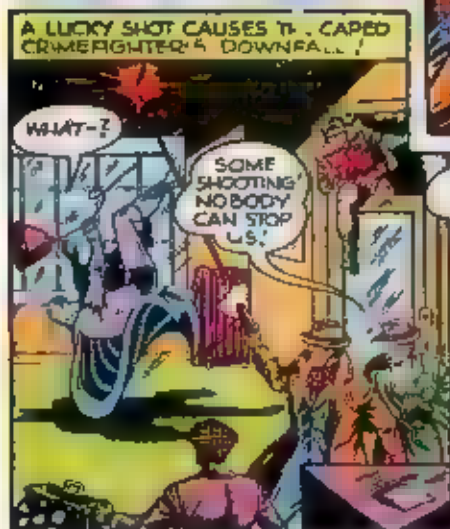
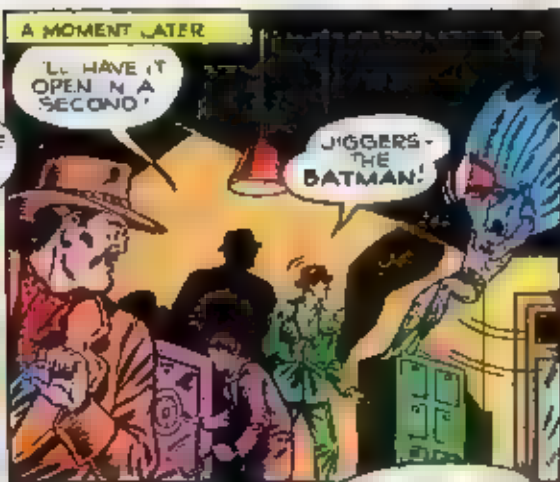
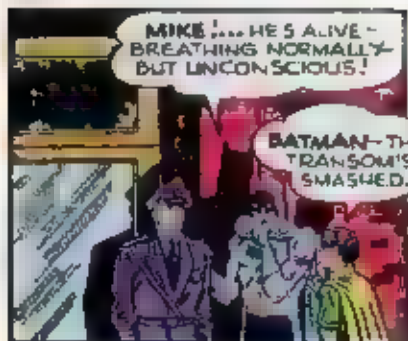
NO TIME TO FINISH WITH
THE SAFE! THE COP'LL
WAKE UP ANY
MINUTE!

SOMETHING TO
REMEMBER ME BY -
TILL WE MEET
AGAIN!

WHEN THE DYNAMIC DUO REACHES
THE STREET...

MIKE! ARE
YOU ALL RIGHT?

YEAH! SORT OF DIZZY,
BUT I'LL PHONE IN FOR
HELP! THOSE GUYS
BEAT IT INTO THE
PARK.





IN A STRETCH OF PARK BEHIND THE MUSEUM...

THINK HE LOOKS SUSPICIOUS BATMAN!

ANYBODY PROWLING IN THE PARK RIGHT NOW'S SUSPICIOUS UP YOU GO



HUM? BATMAN? EASY I'M NO CROOK! MY NAME'S BILL JORDAN AND I'VE BEEN WORKING LATE AT THE MUSEUM



50 ROBBERS ARE HEADED THIS WAY! I THOUGHT I HEARD A COMMOTION OVER NEAR THE ZOO! ANIMALS CAN SENSE TROUBLE!

AS A STUDENT OF NATURAL HISTORY YOU SHOULD KNOW!



IT'S THE ZOO WATCHMAN! UNCONSCIOUS AND BOUND!

WE'LL REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS SOON BUT WE CAN'T WAIT! WE'RE ON THE RIGHT TRACK, ANYWAY!



NO JUNGLE ROVER COULD TRAIL MORE EXPERTLY THAN THIS!

AH! BROKEN TWIGS- AND FOOTPRINTS POINTING TOWARD THE MUSEUM!

AS A BIG GAME HUNTER JORDAN YOU'RE DOING FINE

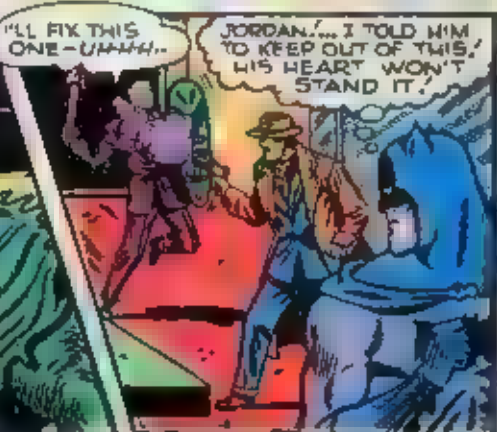
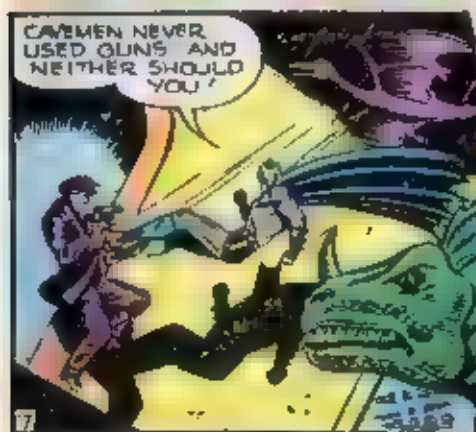


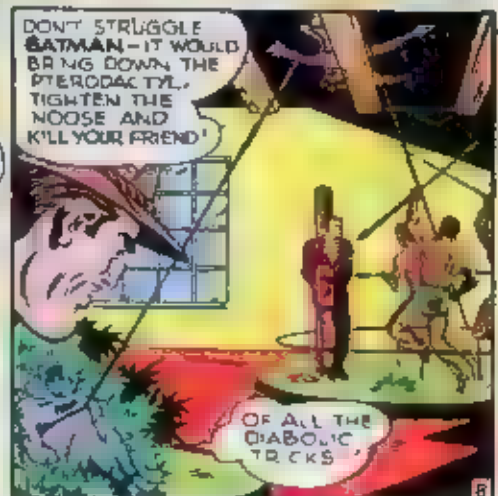
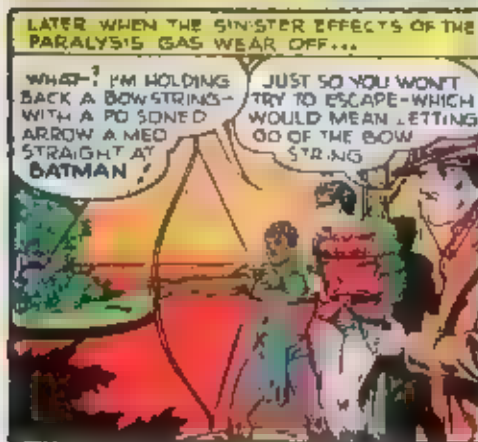
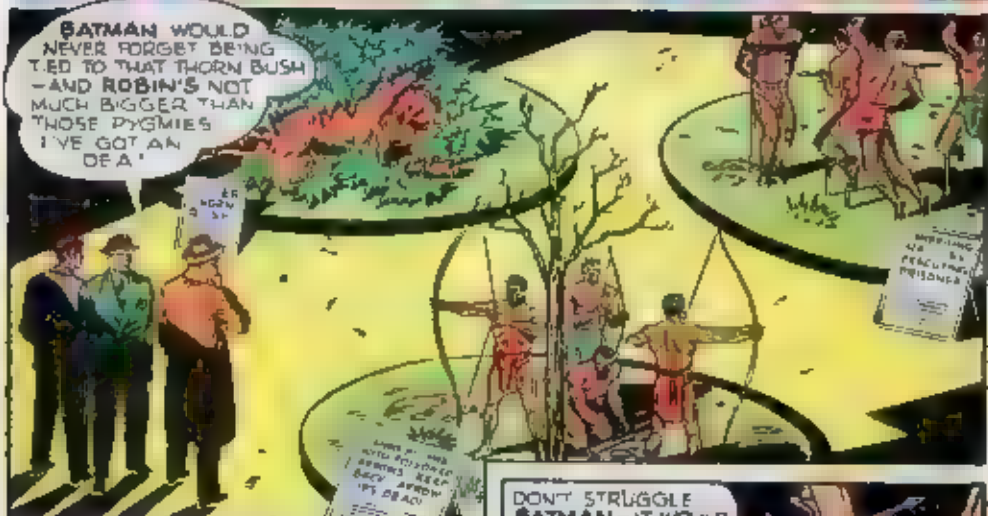
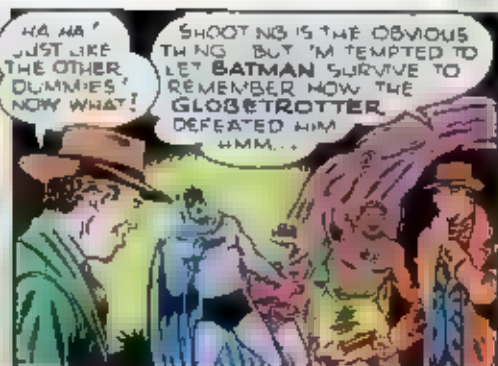
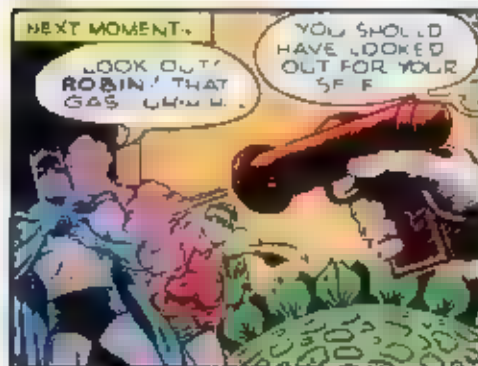
AND AT THE MUSEUM...

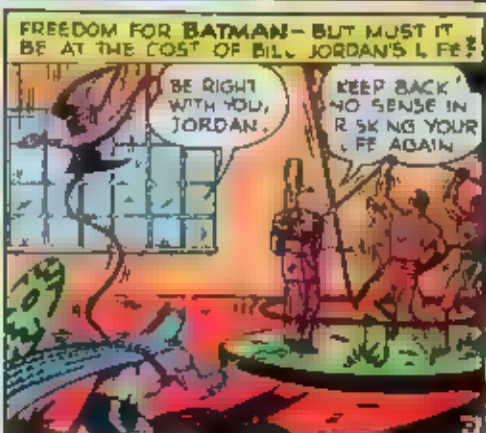
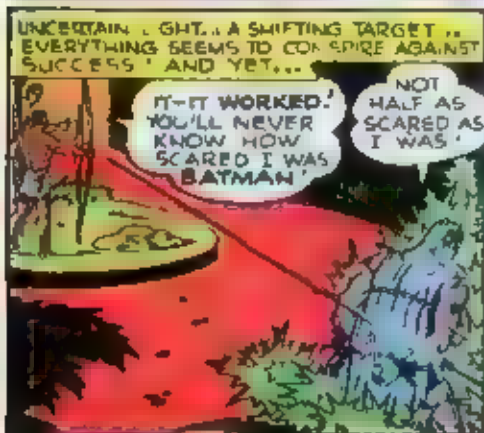
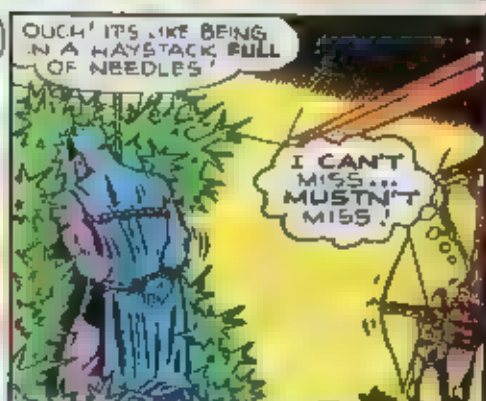
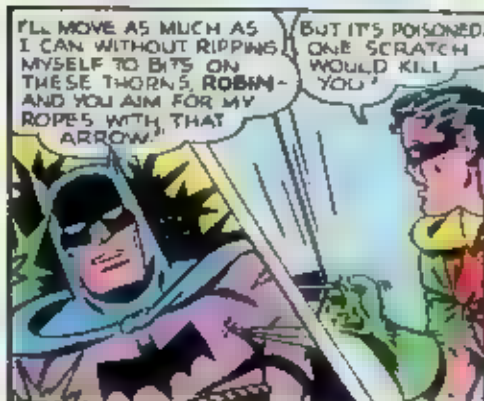
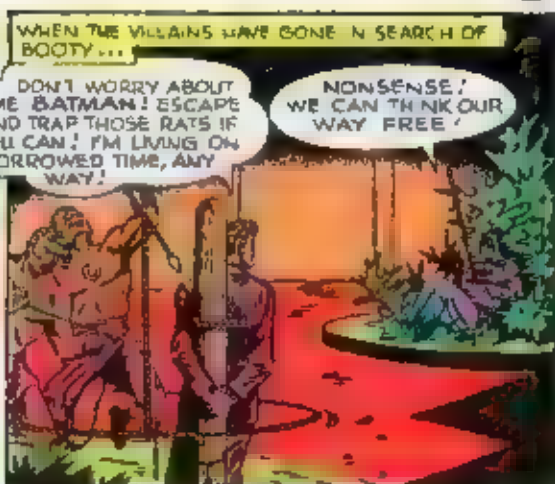
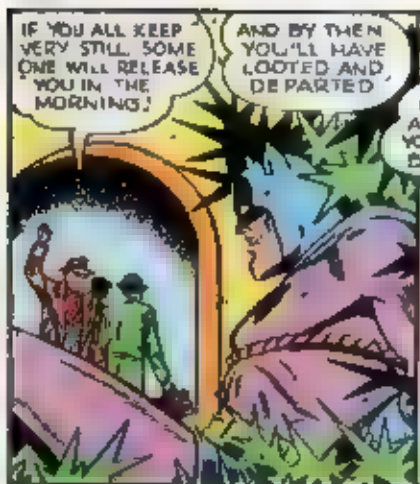
TIE THE GUARD AND TAKE HIS KEYS. THEY'LL SEARCH THE PARK BUT WHO'LL THINK OF LOOKING FOR US WHERE HERE?

WHAT'S MORE WE CAN LOOT THE PLACE!









THE DEADLY SPEARS STRIKE AND ARE FOILED!

THAT DOES

WHEW! NO ONE EVER HAD
A CLOSER CALL, EVEN IN
THE HEART OF THE
JUNGLE!

A HASTY COUNCIL OF WAR FOLLOWS...

MY HEART'S HOLD-
ING OUT FINE SO
FAR. DON'T KEEP
ME OUT OF THE
REST OF THE PARTY

I WOULDN'T DREAM
OF IT! KNOWING THIS
PLACE YOU SHOULD
HAVE SOME IDEAS ON
HOW TO "TRAP THE
GLOBETROTTER!"

PROBABLY HE'LL GO AFTER
THE FAMOUS JEWELLED
DOL, KWA DAN

WE'VE SEEN IT-
ALL RUBIES,
EMERALDS AND
JIGGLINESS

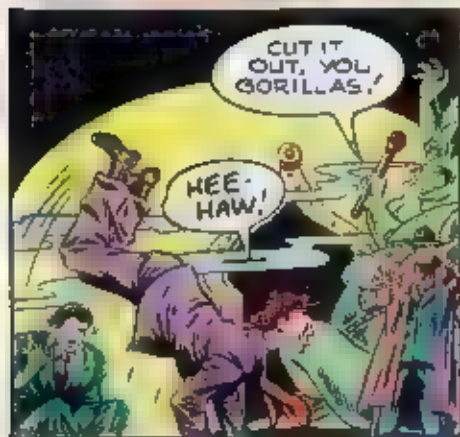
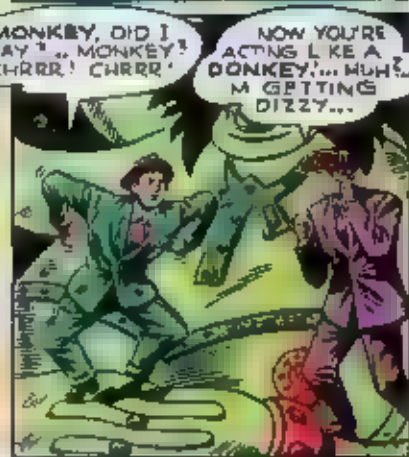
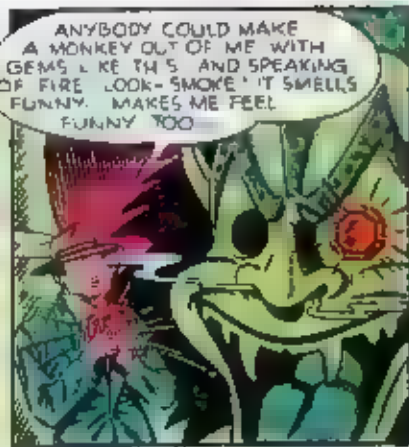
SAVAGES BELIEVED
IT HAD THE POWER
TO CHANGE MEN
INTO ANIMALS!
THAT'S SILLY
OF COURSE...

IS IT? I'VE
READ OF STRANGE
THINGS HAPPENING
IN THE JUNGLES,
AND I HAVE IDEAS
OF MY OWN ABOUT
SOME OF THEM!
HMM...

THIS SHRUB IS CALLED
DATURA FASTUOSA AND BELONGS
TO THE AFRICAN BRANCH OF THE
SOLANACEAE, OR NIGHT
SHADE FAMILY!

JORDAN LEADS THE WAY
TO THE MUSEUM'S BOTANICAL
SECTION, WHERE EXOTIC
BLOOMS EXUDE A HEAVY
FRAGRANCE

LIKE A
BOUQUET IN A
NIGHTMARE



WITHIN THE ISOL'S HOLLOW SHELL, WHERE
ONCE SAVAGE WITCH DOCTORS PROUDLY...

MY TRICK'S GOT ALL OF
THEM; YOU'LL FIND THE
MONKEY AND THE DONKEY
FAIRLY REASONABLE—
BUT NOT THE
GORILLA!

I STILL SAY
IT'S BLACK
MAGIC,
JORDAN

ARGHHHH!

HE THINKS HE'S A
GORILLA AND WANTS
TO WRESTLE.

CHEEP
CHEEP

FIRST TIME I EVER
HAD A CROOK EATING
OUT OF MY HAND

THE BIG FELLOW
LOOKS AS IF HE'D
LIKE TO EAT
ME!

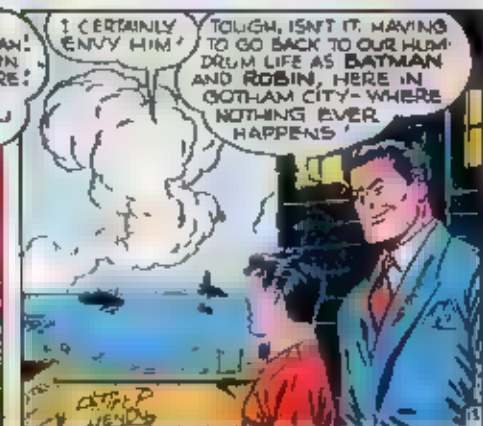
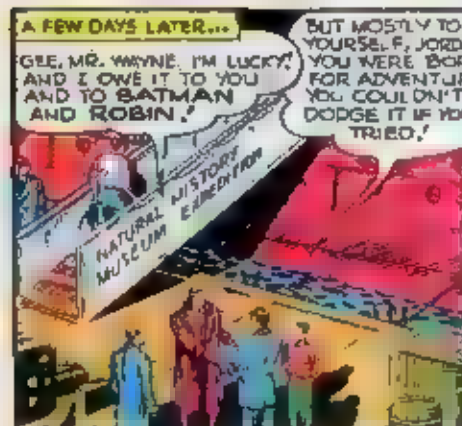
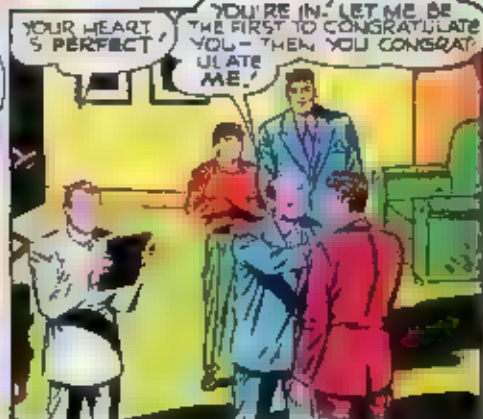
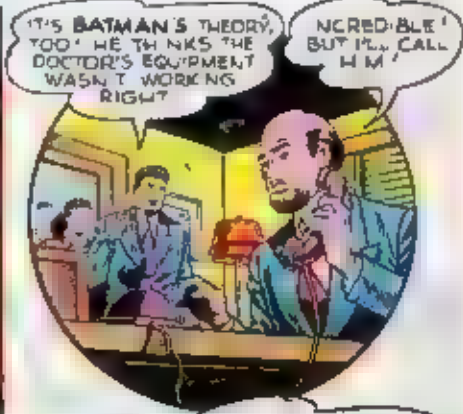
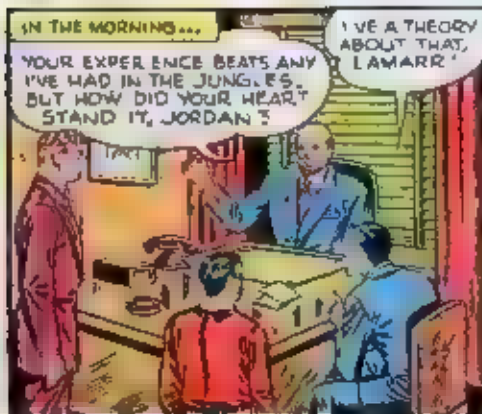
BUT THE MANLY ART
OF BOXING IS MORE
MY STYLE!

UHHHHH—

IT'S ONE OF NATURE'S MOST
AMAZING TRICKS; WHEN
YOU BURN THE DATURA
FASTUOSA DRUG, ITS SMOKE
DRUGS MEN SO THEY THINK
THEY'RE ANIMALS. WITCH
DOCTORS USE THIS TRICK
OFTEN!

FROM NOW ON, I GUESS
THIS EX-GORILLA WON'T
DO ANY MORE GLOBE-
TROTTERING THAN I WILL!

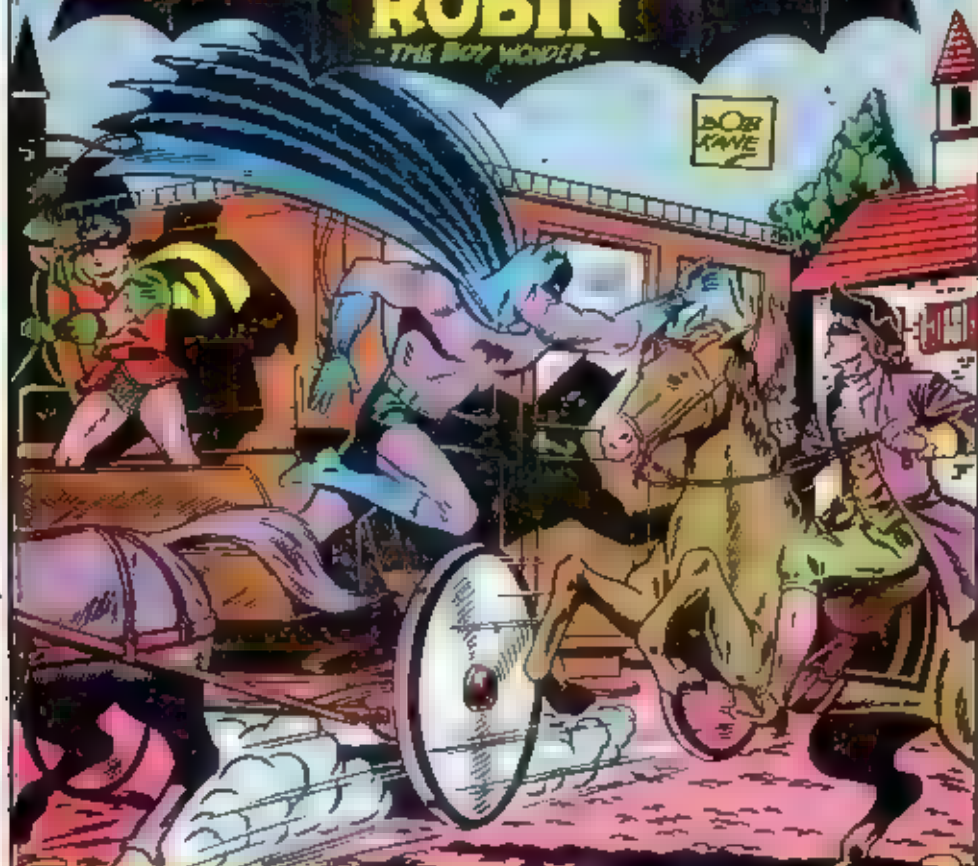
NOT AS MUCH!
SOMETHING TELLS
ME YOU'RE GOING
TO DO PLENTY,
JORDAN



Your favorite crime-busting team -- BATMAN AND ROBIN also appear in DETECTIVE COMICS and WORLD'S FINEST COMICS

BAT MAN

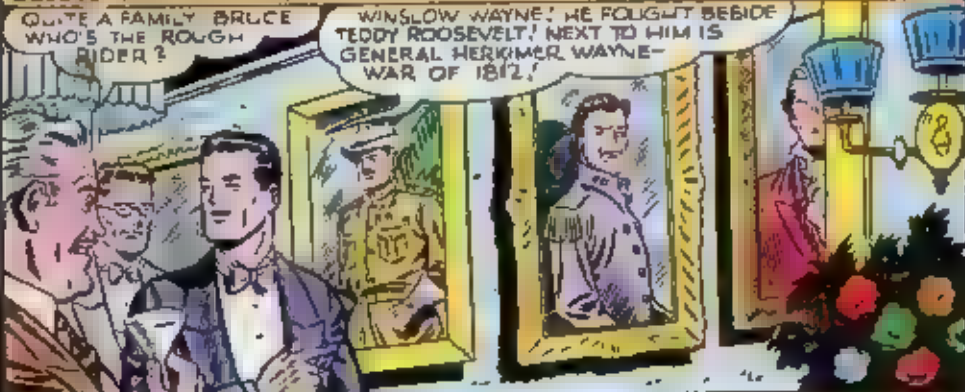
WITH
ROBIN
- THE BOY WONDER -



SUPPOSE ONE OF YOUR ANCESTORS WAS THOUGHT TO BE A THIEF. BUT YOU DIDN'T BELIEVE IT? SUPPOSE YOU WANTED TO PROVE YOUR ANCESTOR'S INNOCENCE. EVEN IF IT MEANT PLAYING DETECTIVE A HUNDRED YEARS BACK IN TIME? IMPOSSIBLE YOU SAY? THEN BRACE YOURSELF... FOR ONE MAN DID JUST THAT. THAT MAN WAS BRUCE WAYNE... ALIAS THE BATMAN! YES, CRIME MARCHES BACKWARD AS BATMAN PLUNGES ACROSS THE CHASM OF TIME INTO A WORLD OF YESTERDAY TO BECOME...

"THE FIRST AMERICAN DETECTIVE"

IN THE PALATIAL HOME OF SOCIALITE BRUCE WAYNE... (ON REALITY, THE BATMAN?)... GUESTS VIEW THE PORTRAITS OF BRUCE'S ANCESTORS...



QUITE A FAMILY BRUCE WHO'S THE ROUGH RIDER?

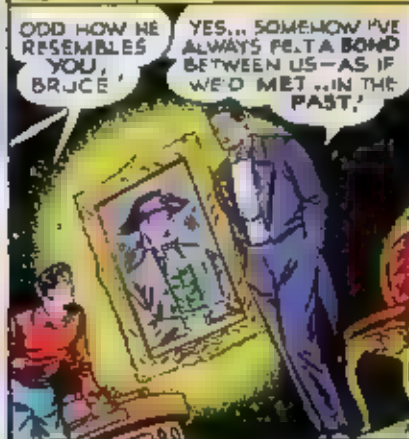
WINSLOW WAYNE! HE FOUGHT BESIDE TEDDY ROOSEVELT! NEXT TO HIM IS GENERAL HERKIMER WAYNE—WAR OF 1812!



AND WHO'S THIS? SILAS WAYNE! HE WAS A PLU. ADELPHI. A SILVER SMITH AND... UH... A HIGHWAYMAN!

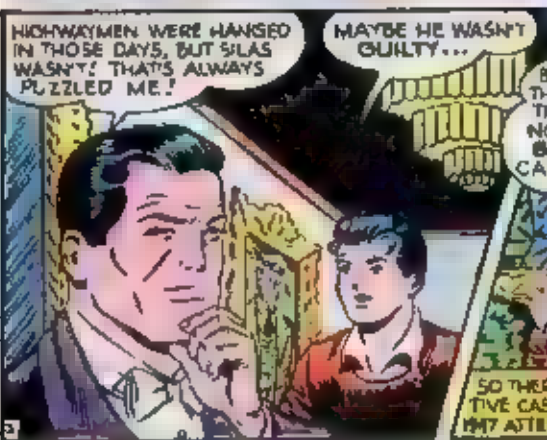
SO! THE FAMILY BLACK SHEEP! TST TST SCANDALOUS. OLD BOY. HA! HA!

LATER... BRUCE STANDS ALONE WITH HIS WARD, DICK GRAYSON...



ODD HOW HE RESEMBLES YOU, BRUCE

YES... SOMEHOW I'VE ALWAYS FELT A BOND BETWEEN US—AS IF WE'D MET... IN THE PAST!



HIGHWAYMEN WERE HANGED IN THOSE DAYS, BUT SILAS WASN'T! THAT'S ALWAYS PUZZLED ME!

MAYBE HE WASN'T GUILTY...



BUT I GUESS THAT'S SOME THING THAT NOT EVEN BATMAN CAN PROVE...

WAIT A MINUTE! WHY NOT? PROFESSOR NICHOLS CAN SEND ME BACK INTO THE PAST AS HE'S DONE BEFORE! DO YOU WANT TO COME ALONG, DICK?





SUDDENLY IRATE CITIZENS POUR FROM HOUSES...

HIGHWAYMEN AGAIN!

THE THIRD TIME THIS WEEK!



THE OTHERS GALLOP OFF

BUT WE STILL HOLD THEIR MASKED COMRADES

TO THE PILLORY WITH THEM!



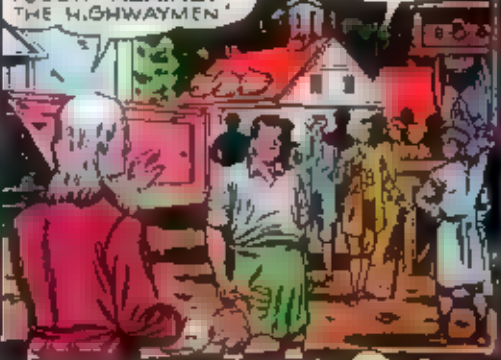
NO, YOU'RE WRONG...

CERTAINLY IN THEIR WILDEST DREAMS THE CRIMEBUSTERS NEVER EXPECTED THIS!



RELEASE THEM, THEY ARE NOT BANDITS: THEY FOUGHT AGAINST THE HIGHWAYMEN!

IT'S DOCTOR BEN FRANKLIN!



BEN FRANKLIN - SCIENTIST, WRITER, STATESMAN... ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED MEN OF HIS DAY!

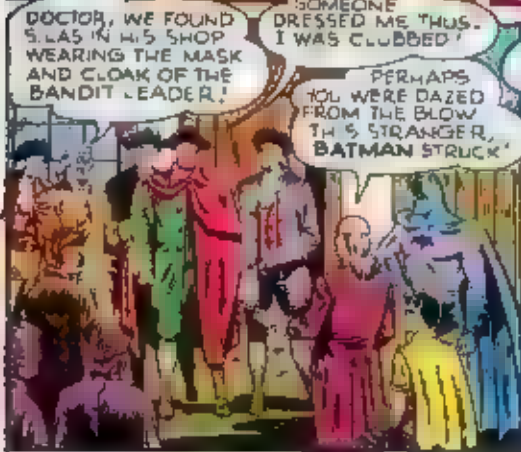
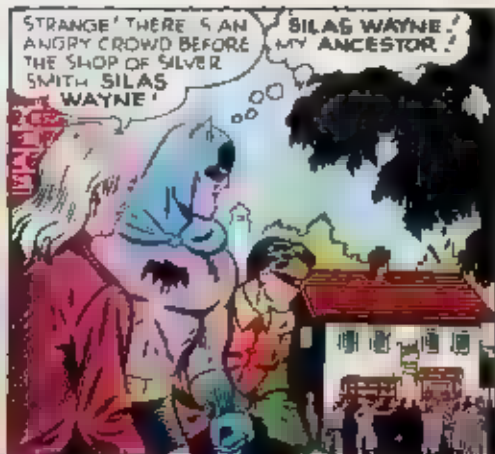
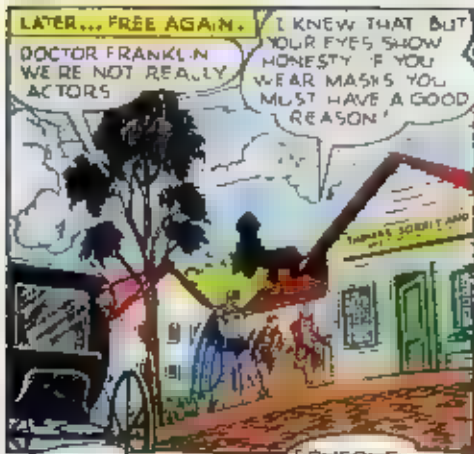
BUT, DOCTOR THEY WEAR MASKS.

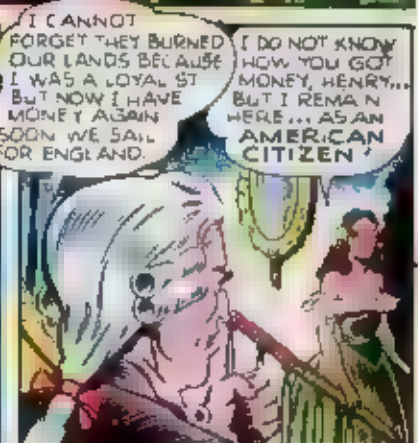
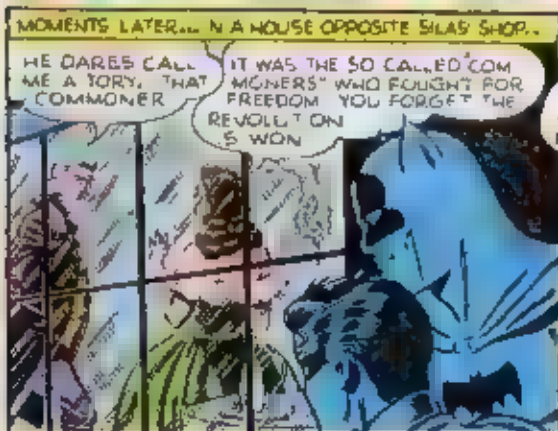
EXACTLY! FROM THEIR COSTUMES, IT'S OBVIOUS THEY ARE MERELY STROLLING ACTORS!

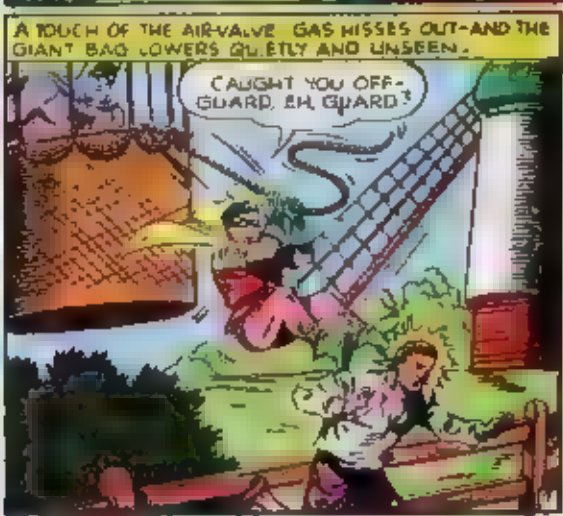
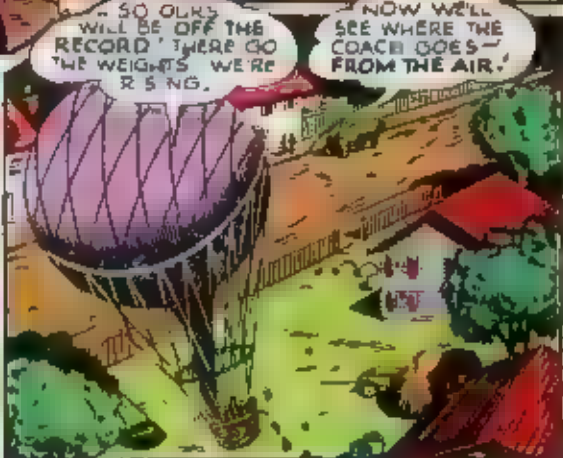
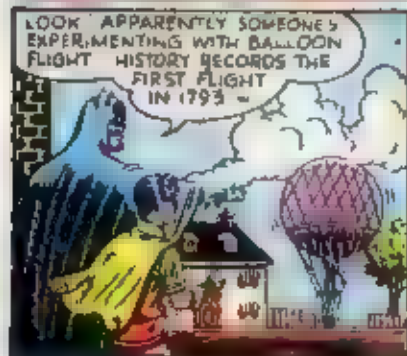
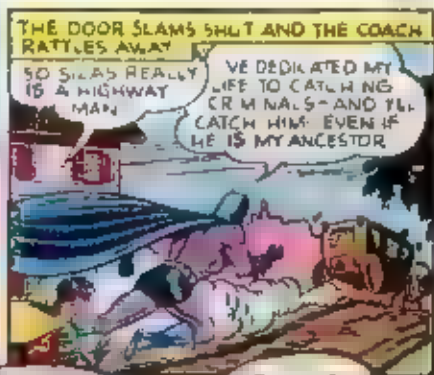
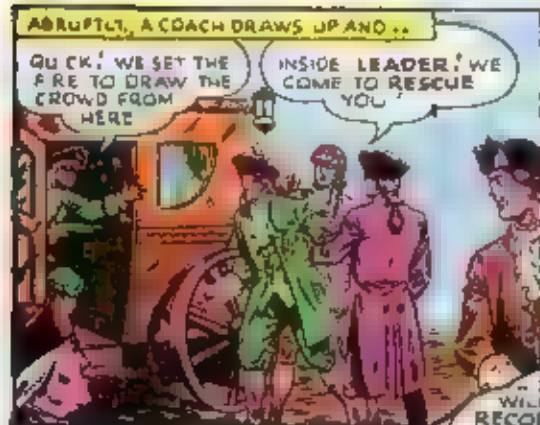
COME GAOLER... I WILL BE RESPONSIBLE! RELEASE THEM!

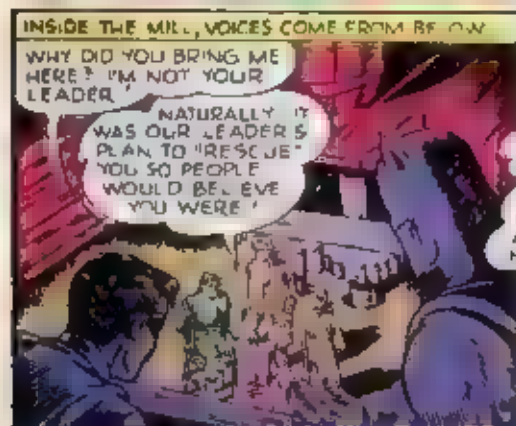
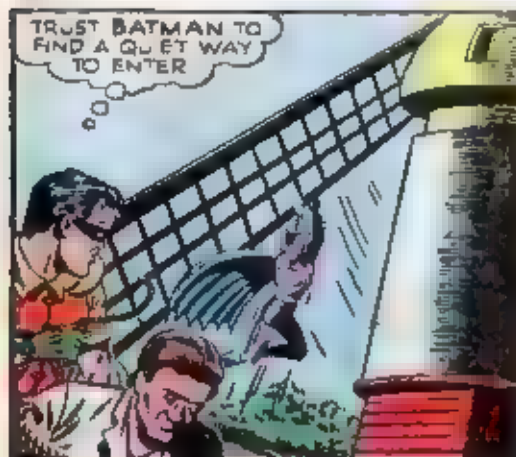
GOLLY, IT'S NOT EVERY DAY WE GET BEN FRANKLIN FOR OUR LAWYER!

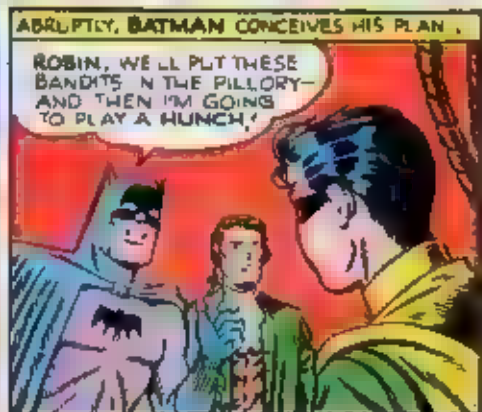
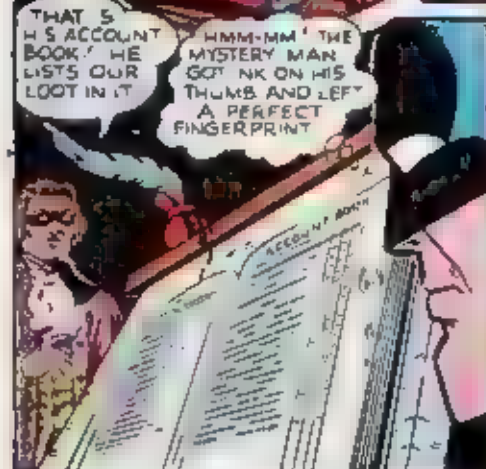
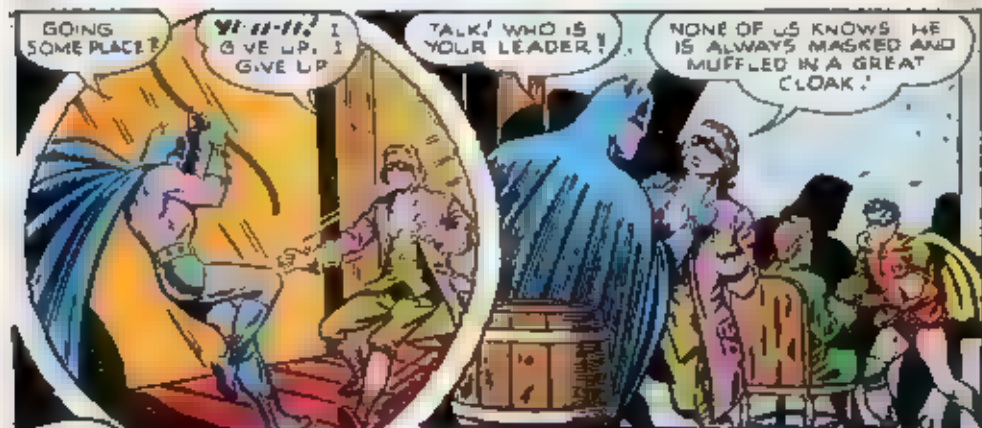


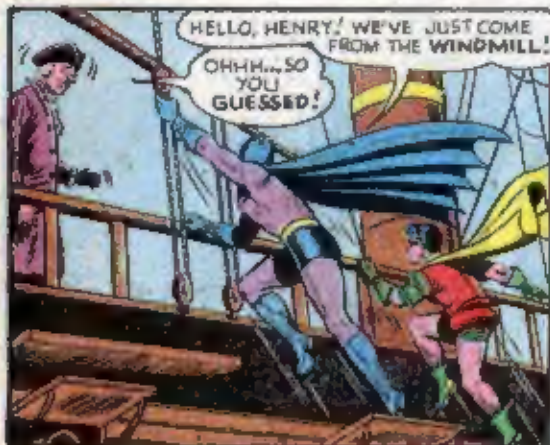












REMOVING THE TORY'S BOOT, BATMAN INDICATES THE OBVIOUS SIMILARITIES.

EVERY MARKING MATCHES. THIS PROVES HENRY GANT PUT HIS OWN SILVER IN SILAS' SHOP.

THAT IS NO PROOF THAT I AM THE HIGHWAY-MAN!

NO... BUT YOUR FINGERPRINTS WILL PROVE THAT.

WHAT ARE... FINGER-PRINTS?

REMEMBER, THIS IS THE YEAR 1787... AND FINGER-PRINTS WERE NOT OFFICIALLY USED IN CRIMINAL IDENTIFICATION UNTIL 1903.

ON OUR FINGER-TIPS ARE MILLIONS OF TINY PORES THAT FORM A PATTERN IN A SPECIFIC RIDGE-AND-FURROW DESIGN.

UHM-MM, BUT IS IT NOT POSSIBLE FOR TWO PEOPLE TO HAVE SIMILAR FINGERPRINTS?

ACCORDING TO A MATHEMATICAL CHECK IT'S BEEN SHOWN THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE CHANCE IN SIXTY-FOUR MILLION.

DOCTOR FRANKLIN, THIS IS WITCHCRAFT!

I LEARNED LONG SINCE THAT PEOPLE CRY "WITCHCRAFT" WHEN THEY ARE IGNORANT AND AFRAID OF KNOWLEDGE!

PRESENTLY, THE NEWLY-INKED PRINT AND THE HIGHWAYMAN'S PRINT ON THE ACCOUNT BOOK ARE VIEWED.



THE PRINTS ARE IDENTICAL!

THE REAL VILLAIN MAKES A BREAK FOR IT!

A NICE TACKLE, SILAS!

A NICE PUNCH, BATMAN!

SILAS, I'VE A FEELING YOU SUSPECTED HENRY WAS THE HIGHWAYMAN!

YES, BUT I KEPT SILENT FOR MARTHA'S SAKE! THE DISGRACE WOULD HAVE KILLED HER MOTHER! NOW, WHAT SHALL I DO?

YOU MUST MARRY MARTHA TONIGHT AND GO TO NEW YORK! I WILL SAY YOU WERE PARDONED! HENRY WILL RETURN HOME, A FREE MAN—ON THE PROMISE THAT HE SAYS NOTHING OF THIS TO HIS AILING MOTHER!

YOU WILL SHOW MY LETTER EXPLAINING YOUR INNOCENCE TO MARTHA WHEN HER MOTHER DIES—BUT ONLY THEN.

I WILL HIDE IT—AND SOME DAY—TRUTH WILL SEEK THE LIGHT!

AS SILAS LEAVES, SUDDENLY BATMAN REMEMBERS...

WE ALMOST FORGOT TO FIND WHAT WE CAME FOR! THE PROOF! SILAS! WHERE WILL YOU HIDE THE PROOF?

AND THEN—

EVERYTHING'S GETTING DIM—SLIPPING AWAY!

LISTEN! I CAN HEAR THE LIBERTY BELL AGAIN...FROM A LONG DISTANCE...

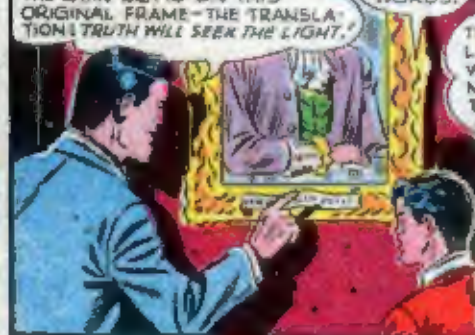
BONG! BONG

THEN—THE SUDDEN AWAKENING—in 1947!



OUR CLUE! IT'S BEEN UNDER OUR NOSES ALL THE TIME. THE LATIN MOTTO ON THIS ORIGINAL FRAME—THE TRANSLATION! TRUTH WILL SEEK THE LIGHT.

SILAS—EXACT WORDS.



THE FRANKLIN LETTER! BUT WHY DIDN'T MARTHA GET TO KNOW ABOUT IT?

CAREFULLY, BRUCE REMOVES THE RIBBON OF WOOD, REVEALING A HOLLOW IN THE FRAME! AND INSIDE—

SILAS DIED SUDDENLY OF PNEUMONIA AT THE AGE OF 30. HE DIED BEFORE MARTHA'S MOTHER...AND HIS SECRET DIED WITH HIM!



BOY, THAT LETTER GETS A TOP SPOT IN OUR TROPHY ROOM!

NO...THIS LETTER IS A HISTORIC DOCUMENT! NO, DICK...NOT OUR TROPHY ROOM...



SO PROOF OF SILAS WAYNE'S INNOCENCE GOES WHERE ALL MAY READ IT! THE FRANKLIN LETTER COMES TO REST IN A GREAT MUSEUM!

"KNOW YE ALL MEN, THIS IS TO VOUCH FOR THE HONESTY AND INTEGRITY OF SILAS WAYNE, SILVERSMITH..."



SEE ROBIN THE BOY WONDER SMASH CRIME SINGLEHANDED
Each month in STAR-SPANGLED COMICS